

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 COLOMB 02938 271203Z
ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 EUR-12 /034 W
-----052396 272044Z /73

R 271101Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY ROME
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 693
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 2938

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINR, CE

SUBJ: BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON GURBACHAN SINGH, INDIAN AMBASSADOR-
DESIGNATE TO SWITZERLAND AND THE HOLY SEE

1. GURBACHAN SINGH AS SERVED AS HIGH COMMISSIONER TO SRI LANKA
SINCE NOVEMBER, 1975.

2. SINGH IS A SIKH. HE AND HIS WIFE, SHAMA MAIRA, HAVE THREE
GOWN CHILDREN. BOTH SINGHS ARE FLUENT, RELAXED ENGLISH CON-
VERSATIONALISTS. THEY MAY ALSO SPEAK SOME FRENCH. THEY RECALL
A POSTING IN WASHINGTON SOME YEARS AGO WITH APPARENT AFFECTION
AND ENJOY SOCIALIZING WITH AMERICANS. THIS IS NOT ALWAYS
EASY ON THE AMERICANS SINCE SINGH IS INCLINED TO INGENUOUSLY
REPEAT WHATEVER ANTI-AMERICAN CLICHES ARE CURRENT, E.G.
"YOUR CONSIDERING BUILDING THE NEUTRON BOMB IS INHUMANE";
"THE NPT IS INTENDED TO DEPRIVE THE LDC'S OF NUCLEAR TECH-
NOLOGY", ETC.

3. BEFORE SRI LANKA, SINGH WAS JOINT SECRETARY FOR EAST ASIA
AND NORTHERN DIVISION (BL TAN, SIKKIM, NEPAL) IN THE MINISTRY
OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. INDIAN TAKEOVER OF
SIKKIM OCCURRED DURING HIS TENURE. SOME SRI LANKA OFFICIALS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 COLOMB 02938 271203Z

CONSIDERED SINGH'S ASSIGNMENT TO ANOTHER OF INDIA'S NEIGHBORS
SO SOON AFTER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SIKKIM AS LACKING IN TASTE.
HOWEVER, SINGH'S ELABORATE PERSONAL COURTESY AND GREAT CAU-
TION IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC UTTERANCES SERVED TO MINIMIZE GSL
SUSPICIONS DURING HIS STAY IN SRI LANKA. HE IS CONSIDERED TO
HAVE RUN THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION EFFECTIVELY, ESPECIALLY
ITS COMPLEX TAMIL EMIGRATION WORK.

4. BORN IN 1923, SINGH ENTERED THE FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1949.

PAST ASSIGNMENTS INCLUDE:

AMBASSADOR TO MOROCCO AND HIGH COMMISSIONER TO KENYA
(1969-70)

OF INDIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO ISLAMIC SUMMIT, RABAT (1969)

COUNSELLOR IN PARIS (1967-69)

NEW DELHI MEA (1965-67)

LAGOS, LONDON, BANGKOK, NEW DELHI, WASHINGTON (1949-65)

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: AMERICAN OFFICIALS MAY FIND IT USEFUL
TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH SINGH ABOUT ATTITUDES AMONG LOCAL RE-
PRESENTATIVES OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES. HE IS PUNCTILIOUS
IN PROTOCOL MATTERS AND DOES NOT TAKE KINDLY TO EXCESSES OF
INFORMALITY. HE IS COOPERATIVE ON ROUTINE MATTERS BUT OVERLY
CAUTIOUS WITH AMERICANS WHEN IT COMES TO SUBSTANCE.
LEVIN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMBASSADOR DESIGNATE, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978COLOMB02938
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780266-0675
Format: TEL
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780617/aaaaaopf.tel
Line Count: 79
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6f2a667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2198714
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON GURBACHAN SINGH, INDIAN AMBASSADOR- DESIGNATE TO SWITZERLAND AND THE HOLY SEE
TAGS: PINR, CE, SZ, VT, (SINGH, GURBACHAN)
To: BERN ROME
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6f2a667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014